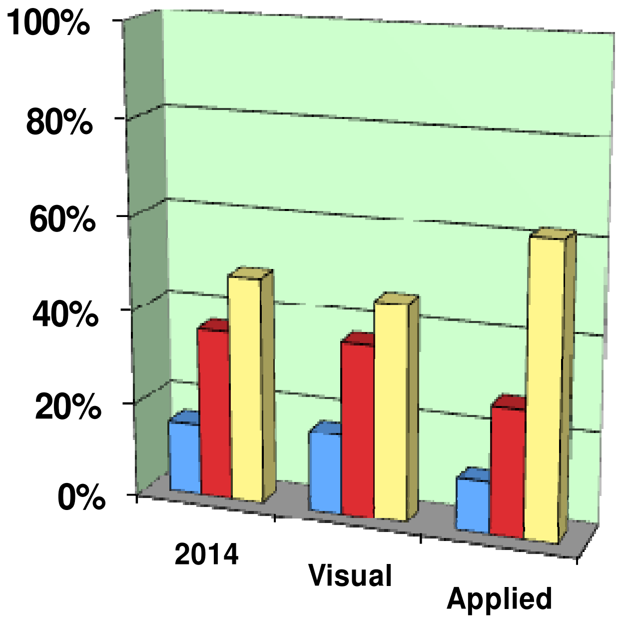
SAU MEMBERSHIP SURVEY 2014



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SAU MEMBERSHIP SURVEY 2014

Introduction

The Scottish Artists Union launched its annual membership survey in 2012 to develop detailed evidence about the working conditions and experiences of artists in the visual and applied arts sector.

This report sets out the findings from the third annual survey, which gathered responses from 422 members in the summer of 2014. The analysis was conducted by an independent researcher. Key findings, changes over time and recommendations are presented against each of the themes explored in the survey. In addition, further analysis relating to key cohorts (area of practice, career stage and rural/urban residence) has also been undertaken. The final chapter contains recommendations to address the themes that have emerged for the SAU and for the broader community working in visual and applied arts practice.

SAU comments are shown in italics and illustrative quotes drawn from artists' responses are presented in indented quotation marks. Tables which present the statistics gathered through the survey are appended to this report.

Section One: membership and benefits

Member profile

1.1 In June 2014 the SAU had 1106 members. Overall membership growth has increased by 17% since last year when it stood at 947 and by 22% since 2012, when there were 908 members. Consistent across the years, visual and applied artists form the substantial majority of our membership, although the applied artists group has seen a drop of 8% in the past year. Through new analysis we are able to identify that 45% of members are urban based and 55% rural based artists. There were 422 responses (up from 371 in 2013, and 231 in 2012) to this years' survey; an overall response rate of 38%. The confidence level is 99% with an error margin of 5%.

Participation in the survey is increasing each year and is keeping pace with the growth in membership. The SAU can rest assured that the findings are statistically reliable and apply across its membership. The responses provided by members are significant and provide important information about the perspectives of members on a range of key issues.

1.2 The majority (89%) of respondents are full members, i.e. practicing professional artists – with the remainder holding associate membership. This profile has remained steady over the 3 years of the survey, although in the past year, for members who described themselves as 'early' in their career, a 14% reduction in full membership was matched by a comparable increase in associated membership, suggesting a likely shift in the membership profile over time.

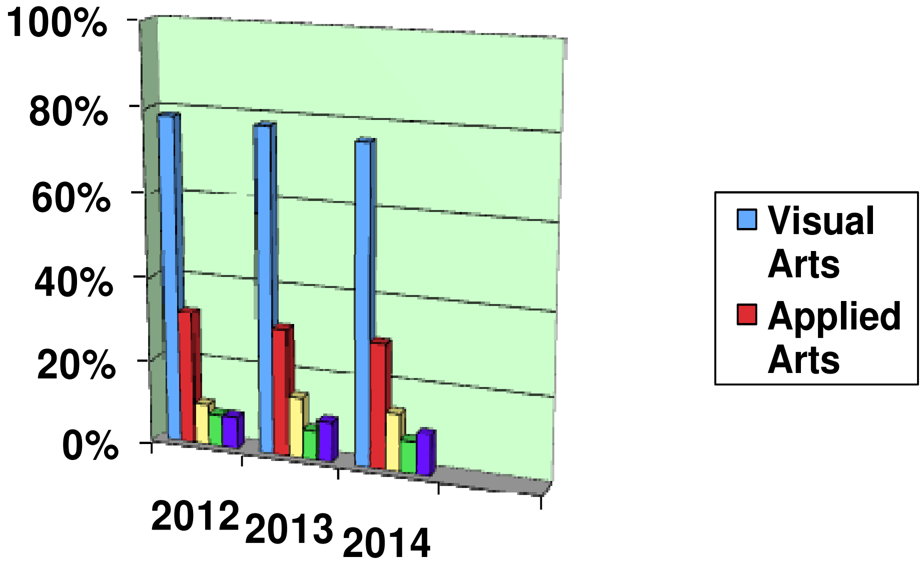
Associate membership of the union is open to those who only partially meet the criteria for full membership and for those working in visual and applied arts management or administration. Associate members have no voting rights. As we continue to recruit new early career artists it is not surprising that a proportion of them will not yet have met the required criteria for full membership.

1.3 The data reveals that membership growth remains strong. The membership has increased by a third since 2011 with a growth rate of over 10% year on year since 2010. However, one respondent commented:

> ***"I am aware of many many artists who are not members of SAU.I think many artists are still unaware that you even exist, sadly. I think simply putting posters around all art studios detailing the benefits and in particular the benefits of a much larger group i.e. more artists joining, equals a much stronger voice. I often ask artists if they are members. The biggest answer is no and there seems to be no clear rational why not."***

The steady and sizeable increase in membership, year on year, reflects positively on the activities of the SAU and suggests that our reputation is growing. However it is clear there are still many more practitioners that we can attract to benefits of collective representation. Additional data on workforce numbers and routes to joining the SAU may help us to target future membership growth activities.

1.4 The data on areas of practice has been largely consistent since 2012. The majority of respondents work in the area of visual arts (76%) followed by applied arts (30%), public art (14%), other (10%) and arts management/administration (8%). There has been some minor variation in the percentage working in public art since 2012: 10% (2012), 15%, (2013) and 14%, (2014). The total count of responses (570) suggests that a significant proportion of artists work across more than one area of practice.



Membership has been broadly consistent over three years; our cross-sector reach is encouraging.

1.5 Since the survey began a small cohort (approximately 10% of the respondents) have ticked "other" in addition to one or more areas of practice, suggesting that elements of their work falls outwith the main typologies used by the SAU. Regular examples include:

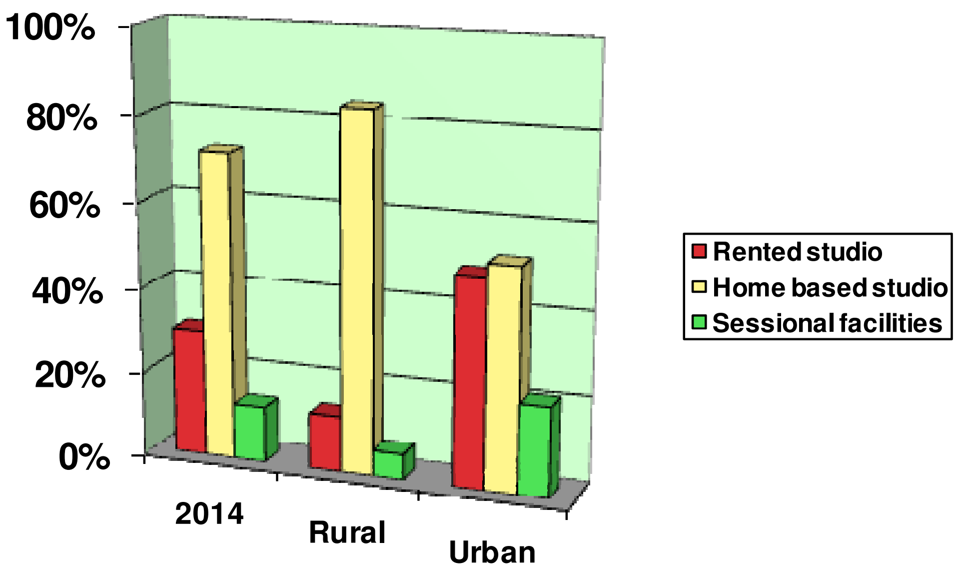
- ***"art therapy"***
- ***"teaching"***
- ***"curation"***
- ***"community art"***
- ***"arts in healthcare"***
- ***"sculpture"***
- ***"performance"***

These comments suggest that some elements of artists' work lie beyond the main categories of practice currently used by the SAU. We will continue to monitor these descriptions to make sure definitions used SAU are fit for purpose; at present we feel that the four main categories encapsulate most of the activity of our membership.

1.6 The SAU has members in every local authority area in Scotland and locations remain consistent with the findings from the two previous surveys. Just over half (52%) of respondents are based within three local authority areas: Glasgow (28%), Edinburgh (15%), and Fife (9%). A further quarter (26%) draw from: Scottish Borders (6%), Argyll & Bute (5%),Dumfries and Galloway (5%), Highland (5%), Perth and Kinross (5%) and Aberdeenshire (5%).

The distribution of responses generally reflects the balance of the membership, which is well spread across Scotland in both urban and rural areas.

1.7 While trends in use of rented studios have remained consistent over the last three years, with roughly a third renting studio space, there have been some interesting variations in use of home and sessional facilities. Almost three-quarters work from a home based studio and this has shown a sharp increase this year: 65% (2012), 63% (2013), 72% (2014). The number of artists using sessional facilities has more than doubled from the first survey; up from 5% in 2012, 6% in 2012 to 13% in 2014. However more significantly is the difference between the rural and urban membership where the vast majority of practice (84%) is based at a home studio for rural members. Some members also combine the use of their home studio with other locations; a handful described working outdoors or at client premises and others highlighted use of community facilities such as village and church halls.



It is clear that despite extensive studio provision nationally, increasing numbers of respondents work from home and that is particularly the case for our rural artists. This appears to confirm concerns we expressed last year around lack of availability of studios in rural areas. It also highlights how little access rural communities have to sessional facilities. These may be the price members are prepared to pay for their choice of location but it may also be a potential area of national development for the arts.

1.8 Responses on stage of career show some notable movement over time. While the proportions in each of the categories are broadly consistent with last years' findings, there has been an increase in the numbers describing themselves as "Early Career" since the survey began. This group stood at 19.4% of the sample in 2012 and had increased to 23.6% in 2014. Just under half of the 2014 respondents said they were "Mid Career". This group is also increasing over time (46.5% in 2014 compared to 43.5% in 2012). Worthy of note is that in this years' survey only 29.9% of respondents described themselves as "Advanced". This reflects a significant downward trend in this group (down from 37% of the sample in 2012).

1.9 A small minority of respondents used the comments section to explain that they had come to art as a "later" or " second career", or had returned to art in retirement.

We are pleased to note these findings show we have a broad reach across the profession and appeal to artists at a range of career stages. We accept that the definitions are both broad and somewhat subjective and so caution should be used with interpretation. It has been suggested there is a need for a refinement to the survey – to ensure that the categories are clear and that a question to capture age bands, as well as the levels of experience of members, would enhance the ability to drawn meaningful detail from future surveys. We are however conscious that many artists also feel that age is an irrelevance and that asking may be a further intrusion. With these caveats, the data suggests that three quarters of members are well established in their careers and that the SAU is continuing to attract committed and engaged professionals. It is encouraging that awareness of the SAU is strong among the emerging generations of artists as they may be among those most vulnerable to exploitation and they will hopefully seek to benefit from membership of the SAU for a long period of time. However, the survey findings raise a question about growth in membership at the entry level and the dropping off at the other end – why is this? As the population demographics show people are living and working longer, are there less 'advanced' artists out there (and if so why?). Is it simply easier to recruit younger people to the SAU? The SAU may need to explore its membership recruitment and retention approach to ensure we are not losing (or failing to attract) the more experienced artists.

Section Two: Member benefits and services

Benefits

2.1 Respondents' reasons for joining the SAU were consistent with last year and a trend is emerging over time of the importance of the benefits offered by membership. Since 2012 joining "for the services and benefits" has risen from 87% to 94%. Members consistently find political representation important; with 55-60% selecting this as a reason for joining each year since the survey began, although there is a slight downward trend overall: 59% (2012), 55% (2013), 54% (2014).

Members join for a variety of reasons; of primary importance are the benefits that a union can negotiate for its members. The majority of SAU members also value political and professional representation. The high level of awareness and regard for the benefits the SAU provides is encouraging.

2.2 The benefits used by members remain largely consistent with a small increase over the years in use of Public Liability Insurance: 91% (2012), 93% (2013), 94% (2014); and a slight increase in use of studio contents insurance: 14% (2012), 15% (2013), 18% (2014). There has been fluctuation in use of the material discount 51% (2012), 55% (2013), 47% (2014). Some expressed intent to make more use of discounts and benefits in future; a handful said that the discounts did not apply to them and one was critical of the material discounts on offer.

Every year a small number of people state their intention to make use of benefits they have not taken advantage of before. This indicates it may be helpful to maintain awareness of members' entitlement to benefits, with reminder messages at regular intervals. Given the year on year increases in the percentage of artists working at home we also feel there is greater potential for use of studio contents insurance. We wish to ascertain whether artists have alterative insurance arrangements or are vulnerable to risk. If so there is scope to promote the discount that is available to members. The SAU is also conscious of the need to constantly seek new materials discount agreements.

2.3 Overall the data on use of Public Liability Insurance shows a general upward trend; questions on use were introduced for the first time in 2013. Exhibitions have increased from 67% to 71%. Just over a half of our members (52%) require it for open studio activity (a slight drop on last year) and a similar percentage (51%) use it for teaching. There has also been small upward trends in use for public events (up 4% to 47%) and just over a quarter (28%) require it for fairs. Additional areas of use were also provided in the qualitative comments:

- ***"art handling for organisations"***
- ***"residencies"***
- ***"artwork in public spaces"***
- ***"community art practice"***
- ***"filming in public locations"***
- ***"installation of commissioned work in public buildings"***

The findings regarding artists' use of Public Liability Insurance demonstrates the range of activities regularly undertaken as part of professional practice. We are proud the Public Liability Insurance provided by the SAU facilitates a multitude of professional activity including commercial work.

2.4 In terms of options for new services and benefits, members once again responded positively to all the suggestions put forward and there were small increases across most categories. The most popular benefit was Financial Services: 55% (2013), 59% (2014);closely followed by Legal/Contractual advice: 52% (2013), 53% (2014). Just over one third ticked "Professional Indemnity Insurance": 34% (2013), 37% (2014); and roughly a quarter selected Arbitration/Conflict resolution: 23% (2013), 28% (2014).

Artists require a range of professional support services and our members have indicated there is scope for the SAU to increase its activity in this area. We will reflect on the most effective way to use our resources (time, purchase power and position) to take this forward.

2.5 Members' suggestions for additional benefits were far ranging and included:

- ***"A system to provide sick pay for those who primarily work freelance"***
- ***"advice on insurance"***
- ***"[additional types of insurance] builders and contents and maybe employer liability"***
- ***"career advice or mentoring"***
- ***"forum day to meet other artists"***
- ***"group leisure discounts"***
- ***"legal advice"***
- ***"standard artist rates for exhibitions and gallery fee standards and guides"***

A number of people reflected that rather than the SAU providing additional services, it could play an important role in monitoring existing providers of support to artists and endorse/signpost good practice.

These suggestions are indicative of professional development needs that are not currently being met and capture a demand for support with practical matters and financial issues. They indicate that some members face additional barriers to employment and suggest that our artists require support with regards to elements of career progression. SAU needs to take this on board and address these needs in partnership with other agencies.

Section Three: Communication with members

Communication

3.1 Despite a recent upgrade to the SAU website, findings around visits to the site are consistent with the last two years – most members (95%) visit the website seldom (30%) or never (65%); less than 5% use it regularly. However, almost a third (30%) of members feel the new website is an improvement; 69% had not visited at the time of the survey.

- ***"the website gives an important online presence and support/info system which I can look at and get latest updates. Without the presence and development of SAU I would be really struggling as an artist, particularly in a rural area. So thanks!!"***

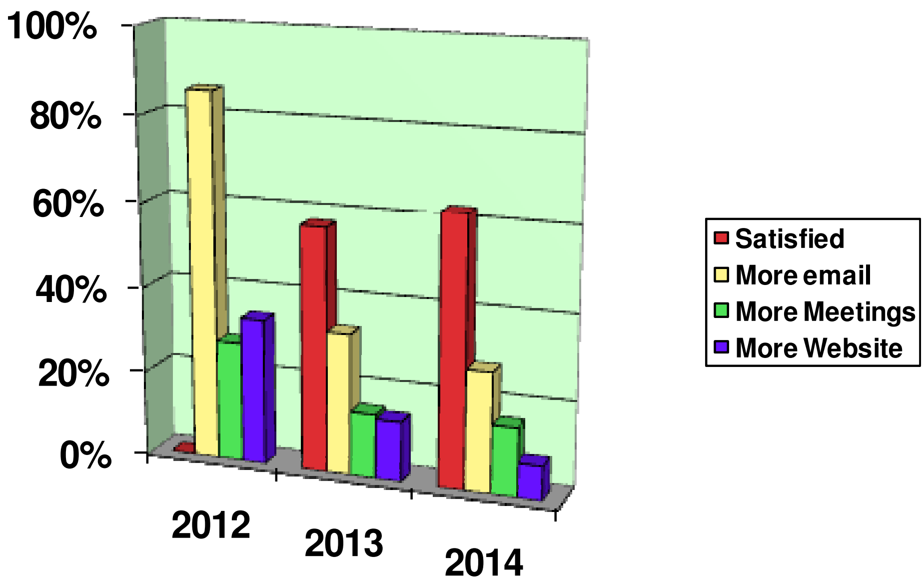
While we note the positive response by those who have visited our new site the usage rates are disappointing given that the website is a key tool for communication. We will continue to promote its value to the membership as well as offering alternative communication channels that align with members' preferences. There is a balance to be struck between ensuring we communicate effectively and expecting too much of our membership in terms of their level of engagement with us on an ongoing basis (see 3.3); not all members are interested in, nor require, frequent updates from our organisation. We believe that the recent website redesign has made our site more engaging, informative and user-friendly and that this will encourage members to make further use of the site. The website also plays a role in communicating beyond the current membership; it is a useful branding tool and helps our efforts to engage with potential members, the wider community and other stakeholders.

3.2 Facebook use remains consistent at 24%; although there is some way to go with communication this clearly has a greater reach than the website at present. It is worth highlighting that 24%, when applied to the full population of the membership equates to 265 individuals - a sizeable Facebook group. In 2014 the SAU established a Twitter feed, now used by 5% of the membership.

It appears that Facebook is a popular method of connection and a potential area for membership recruitment and expansion. Given that the current membership of the SAU's Facebook community page stands at 614, it is clear that interest in our activities extends beyond the membership and that we are engaging with the wider community through this channel.

3.3 A clear majority of members are satisfied with the SAU's current level of communication: 57% (2013), 63% (2014). In relation to further improving communication arrangements there has been a marked decrease in (i) the numbers feeling that email news and updates could be increased: 86% (2012), 29% (2014); (ii) those asking for more regional meetings: 26% (2012), 16% (2014); and (iii) members seeking further website developments: 34% (2012), 8% (2014). There have been variations in those asking for more postal communication although the overall numbers are small: 6% (2012), 2% (2013), 4% (2014). Other explanatory comments included:

- *"send out an automatic reminder of membership renewal a few weeks before happens to ensure there are funds available in the bank"*
- *"newsletters are great"*
- *"more use of social media – especially Twitter"*
- *"more events"*



The trends relating to feedback concerning communication intersect, with a sizeable majority of members now saying they are happy with the levels as they stand. There has been a sharp reduction in the numbers advocating increased communication activity via a range of media. Care should be taken in ensuring the SAU communication strategy continues to chime with the needs and interests of members.

3.4 Several members made positive comments about the survey, linked to (i) valuing the SAU's efforts to seek artists' views, (ii) finding the questions thought-provoking and (iii) being reminded and updated on developments of importance to them, for example revised rates of pay or welfare changes. Comments included:

- *"impressed with the range of questions and feel I must make more of an effort to look at website and FB to be aware of more issues"*
- *"thank you for taking the trouble to find out about the practicalities we are all dealing with"*
- *"these surveys make me realise how poor I am at charging a realistic rate"*

These findings of the survey are particularly encouraging as it is a key tool for engaging with the sector and identifying issues faced by professional artists. Overall we are heartened that satisfaction with our communication has increased and requests for additional improvements have declined; however there is always room for progress. We will continue our proactive approach, for example: our increased online social presence through Twitter; we recently hosted a conversation cafe event for our members; and have now firmly established the value of our annual survey. The SAU will reflect on your feedback and keep up efforts to encourage dialogue with our members.

Section Four: Funding awards

Public funding

4.1 Since 2012, members report no significant changes in their experiences with public funding awards. Less than half of the membership (41%) has successfully applied for a public funding award and the same percentage (41%) have never applied. Almost one fifth (17%) have applied without success. Of those that successfully applied, 32% have received 1-3 awards and 11% have received 4 awards or more.

Private funding

4.2 The findings in relation to private funding awards have shown some movement over time. In 2014 One-third (33%) successfully applied for a private funding award (up from 22% in 2012). More members seem to be applying for such awards as, in 2014 only 55% had never applied, as compared to 67% in 2012. A minority (12%) have applied without success and this figure is stable over the 3 years of the survey. In 2014, of those that successfully applied, 27% had received 1-3 awards and 6% had received awards 4 or more times. Some of the additional comments from artists reveal funding concerns:

- ***"I was very deterred from having to fill out ambiguous questions"***
- ***"very disappointed when applied, no explanation as to why no award given"***
- ***"tried to get help, was told it was basically a loan I had to pay back, so useless"***
- ***"there is a feeling that most of us 'need not apply'…"***
- ***"the amount of funding to individual artists is very low and [applications] require a disproportionate amount of time"***
- ***"plenty of ideas and no idea how to do any of it"***
- ***"my age seems to make it impossible – over 50 years old"***

Significant numbers within the membership have never applied for a public or private funding award; one of the key routes by which public and third sector organisations provide resources to the arts community. This raises questions such as: Has there been a decrease in funding opportunities in recent years? Have negative experiences discouraged artists from making future applications? Are artists unaware of available funding routes? Do artists lack skill or experience with grants application processes? Is there a perception that chances of success are slim? Do some prefer commercial practice to receiving grants and funding, because of perceptions of bureaucracy or restrictions on practice?

Section Five: showcasing your practice

Opportunities to showcase practice

5.1 Views on opportunities to showcase practice are slightly more encouraging than those expressed in previous surveys, with a slight increase in frequency of opportunities to showcase practice: 26% (2012), 25% (2013), 30% (2014). There is also an overall trend of improved expectations as to anticipated opportunities to showcase in the year ahead: 28% (2012), 31% (2013), 32% (2014).

5.2 Some of the comments made by members give more insight into artists' thoughts and experiences around showcasing their practice. A handful noted that they are making showcasing more of a priority:

- ***"more opportunities due to personal circumstances having more time to pursue"***
- ***"more opportunities but less financially rewarding"***
- ***"I'm making more of an effort!"***
- ***"I see residencies and those kinds of opportunities as equally important to public exhibition"***

The findings make it clear that our members view opportunities to showcase work as being very important to the profession and the upsurge in identified opportunities is a hopeful development for the sector. The qualitative comments also show the range of forums in which artists create a platform for their work. There may be scope for the SAU to provide more support to members with regards to planning and prioritising exhibitions, residencies and other showcasing activities. It is interesting to note that last year's forecast with regards to opportunities this year was entirely accurate; suggesting that members have realistic perceptions about the opportunities available.

5.3 Overall, confidence in the sector is on a slight upward trajectory with members now evenly split between answers to the question on the health and viability of the sector; positive views have marginally increased as follows: 47.6% (2012), 49.7% (2013), 50.1.% (2014). The mix in experiences is evidenced by the range of comments put forward in response to this question, including:

- ***" a reasonable level of restoration work"***
- ***"although the community is vibrant…it is extremely difficult to make a living"***
- ***"better than I would expect given the comments in the media about the recession"***
- ***"there is less community art available, fees are lower and projects are shorter"***

The overall findings in this section are encouraging and evidence presented later in this report gives more insight into income and views on the buoyancy of the sector. We will continue to monitor these figures in future surveys.

Section Six: income, employment status and welfare

Sources of income

6.1 Some notable changes have taken place in the income sources since 2012. Most income source categories have shown reductions over the period (please note these findings relate to income sources as opposed to overall levels of income). The key differences between the 2012 and 2014 figures are as follows: Local Authorities down from 49% to 29%, Public Galleries, the Voluntary Sector, Higher and Further education have all seen reductions by approximately half over the same period. Publicly funded commissions, residencies, direct selling and selling through galleries have also seen reductions, although to a lesser extent. Private commissions and workshops fell between 2012 and 2013 but have shown signs of modest increase this year. Between the past two years there has been an increase from online sources: 17% (2013), 23% (2014) and an increase in healthcare as a funding source: 5.2% (2013), 6.7% (2014).

6.2 A minority of members stated in comments that they are also reliant on income from a pension. Further information about receipt of welfare payments is covered at 6.12.

While these findings suggest there have been changes in sources of income in recent years, we highlight that overall income levels are broadly consistent across the years as shown below. In relation to members receiving pensions, although the union does not limit membership by age we are clear that we seek to represent those that wish to work professionally in the sector.

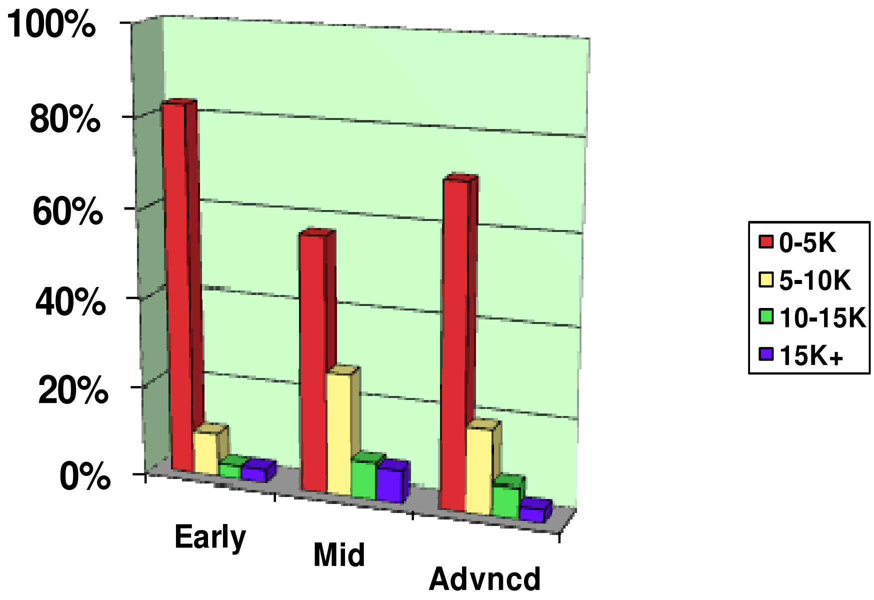
Turnover

6.3 With regards to turnover, the findings are consistent across the years. Over two thirds have a turnover of up to £10k: 71% (2012), 71% (2013), 72% (2014). Another fifth rest at between £10k and £25k: 22% (2012), 23% (2013), 22% (2014). There have been small fluctuations in the minority with a turnover between £25-£50k: 4.5% (2012), 5.2% (2013), 4.3% (2014)and those with a turnover of more than £50k: 2.5% (2012), 0.6% (2013), 1.3% (2014).

Earnings

6.4 The findings about after tax earnings are slightly different, showing fluctuations in those earning £0-5k: 72.1% (2012), 65.2% (2013), 66.8% (2014); increases in the £5k-£10k bracket: 14.4% (2012), 21.1% (2013), 21.1% (2014). The £10k-£20k group has remained consistent: 7.0% (2012), 7.3% (2013), 6.8% (2014). There have been minor variations around the higher earnings, with an average of 2% earning £20k-£30k and 1% earning £30k plus over the years.

6.5 When we look at the earnings across the career stages we see that that contrary to expectations, optimum earnings appear to be achieved mid career rather than at the advanced career stage. Across all career stages it is still the case that more than 80% are not managing to earn more then £10k per annum.



The picture painted by the combination of income and turnover data remains very concerning. Only 2% are able to generate earning over £20k (far below the median[1] wage in Scotland, which was £26,472 in 2013) and over two thirds of respondents earn less than five thousand pounds per year from their practice.

- ***"to make a living you need to make shite! And lots of it!"***
- ***"I think it is extremely hard to maintain practice whilst juggling three part-time zero hours contracts. I have worked on some prestigious art projects and each time have encountered poor budget control on behalf of commissioners and subsequent reduction of fees. Similarly I don't see any respect for workshop fees /teaching etc. I teach adult education evening classes, which is great, but even the council does not pay in line with hourly suggested union pay rates."***

6.6 A third (35%) of respondents are optimistic about their anticipated earnings in the year ahead, feeling they will earn more than the previous year and roughly half believe they will earn the same (51%). This confirms a trend since 2012, with levels of optimism about income showing signs of improvement.

While the findings about actual turnover and income remain worrying, there are signs of growing optimism year on year. However although a third of people expect their earnings to increase next year we have yet to see any evidence that this optimism has ever been fulfilled.

[1] http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefingsAndFactsheets/S4/SB_14-01.pdf

Employment status

6.7 Similar to last year, half of respondents (50%) said they are full time practitioners, with these split roughly between those funded entirely through practice (24%) and those with part time income (26%). Over one third (40%) are part time with income from a mixture of practice and other income, and 10% are part time with another full time income. The latter figure has seen a threefold increase in the numbers of artists who moved from art plus part time work – to art plus full time work, in the period since 2012 (up from 2.9% to 9.7%).

6.8 Artists use a variety of methods to secure additional earnings:

- ***"art work 1-2 days a week, yoga teaching 3-5 times a week"***
- ***"seasonal (part time post) and casual zero hours contract work = a living but a stressful and insecure one"***
- ***"I also run an artists studio which supplements my income"***
- ***"I have a lodger"***
- ***"I work a compressed full time job and 3 days a week as an artist"***
- ***"part time postie work leaves afternoons plus four days a week free"***

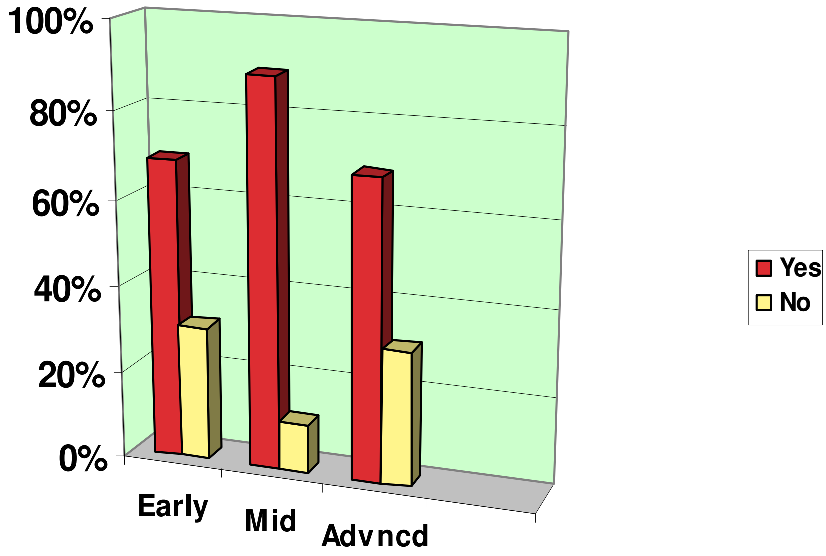
6.9 Through the comments section members expressed wide differences in personal circumstances and income expectations:

- ***"I have a small child"***
- ***"I also have caring responsibilities"***
- ***"art as a hobby with occasional sales"***
- ***"I struggle. I live like a student and sometimes earn just enough to pay the rent"***
- ***"being retired I am not looking for much of an income –I enjoy teaching small groups"***

The SAU's message is consistent: given the difficulties in securing a living income it is on the one hand praiseworthy that half the respondents describe their practice as full time; but concerning that so many have such limited income. Many artists have to subside their practice through additional employment which limits the time they can devote to undertake and develop their professional activity; those that cannot secure extra income may be facing extreme financial difficulties.

6.10 For the first time the annual survey asked members about their type of employment and almost all (399) answered the question. The vast majority (78%) of our membership are registered as self employed.

6.11 Although there was a minor variation between visual and applied artists and absolutely no difference between rural and urban artists, there was a significant increase recorded in career stage where 20% more (89%) mid career artists are currently registered as self employed.



The self-employment data is particularly interesting and we will reflect on what this means for our activities. There may be scope to widen the services offered to ensure they fit with self-employment needs, working in partnership with agencies that provide support in this area such Business Gateway so that members are fully aware of resources they are entitled to including grants and start up funds. Given the findings on low levels of income the self-employment data suggests that our members will be particularly vulnerable to factors which affect self employed groups; such as economic downturns and changes in tax structures. It is also concerning that a group with such low levels of income will bear sole responsibility for pension contributions, maternity and sick pay. Self-employed workers play a role in adding to economic growth and our profession is distinct from many others when considering that the national rate of self-employment is only 12.2%[2]

6.12 For the first time our annual survey asked members about their receipt of welfare payments. Almost one quarter of respondents (100 individuals) provided an answer to the question, identifying that 67% are in receipt of the Working Tax Credit, 29% receive Working Families Tax Credit, 15% receive Housing Allowance, 15% receive the Disability Living Allowance and 1% receive Income Support Allowance.

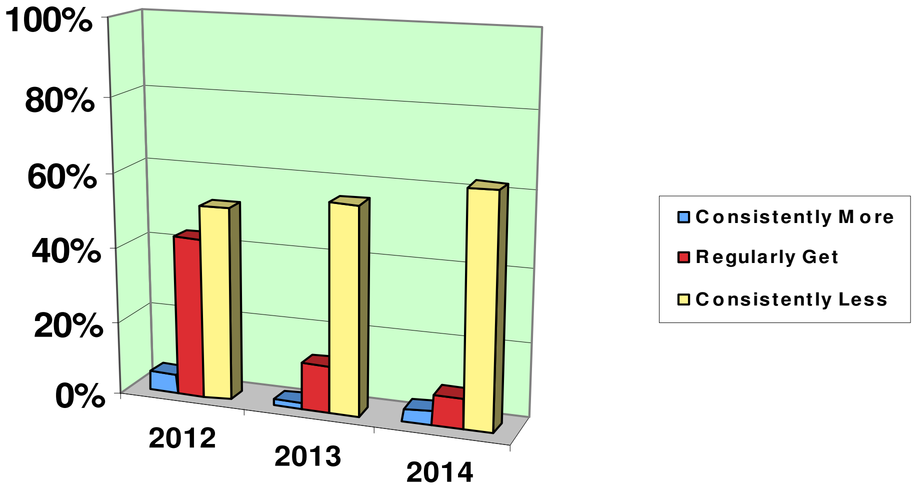
This information supports our argument that many members of the arts community face financial difficulties and also provides a more comprehensive picture about members' circumstances; many are parents and a significant minority have disabilities. It is not clear whether or not the 322 respondents who did not answer the question skipped it because they (i) do not receive benefits, or because (ii) they felt uncomfortable in providing this information. Next year we will include additional answer options on the theme of "I do not receive welfare payments" and/or "none of your business" so we can ascertain whether or not the findings are applicable across the entire community or relate to a quarter of the membership.

[2] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/05/6728/2

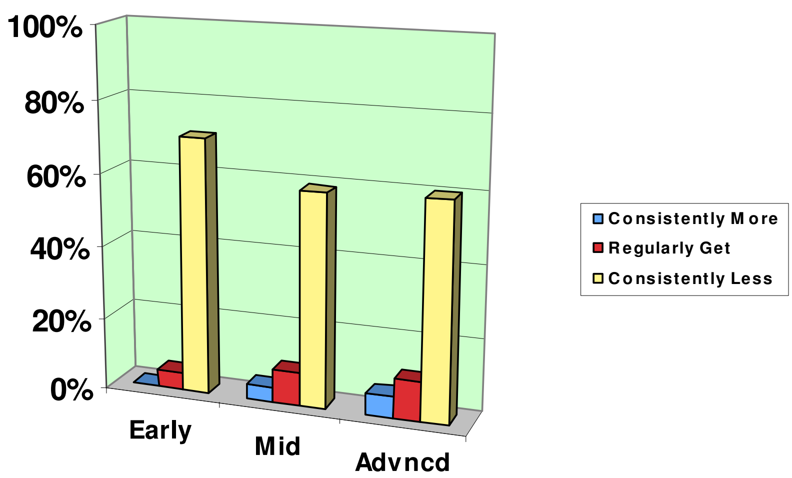
Section Seven: recommended rates of pay and contracts

Pay

7.1 Overall the picture with regards to rates of pay is discouraging. Since the survey began there has been a 10% increase in the number who regularly receive <u>less</u> than the recommended rates of pay: 52% (2012), 56% (2013), 62% (2014). There have been fluctuations among the minority of artists who regularly receive <u>more</u> than the RROP: 5% (2012), 2% (2013), 4% (2014). Overall there has been a marked reduction in those who <u>regularly receive</u> the recommended rates of pay: 43% (2012), 13% (2013), 8% (2014)



7.2 When rates of pay are looked at in relation to career stage in 2014 we can see that this effects those in the early stage of their career the most.



Workshops

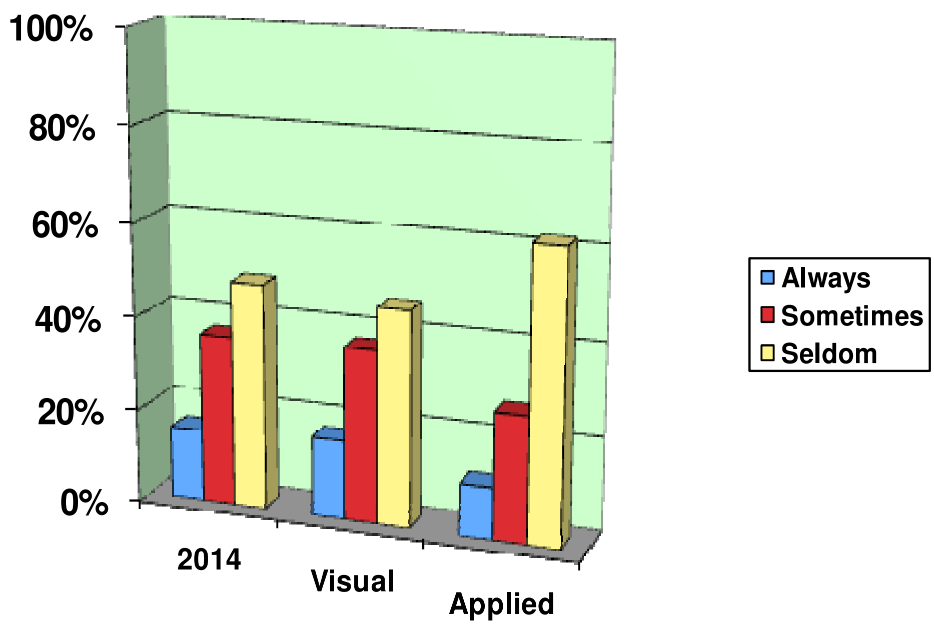
7.3 Findings about members' pay in relation to workshops are consistent with the responses received last year. There has been a small (3%) increase in facilitation; almost two thirds (60%) of members now facilitate workshops. Across membership, almost one third (29%) receive less than £150 per day and the same percentage (29%) receive between £150-£250 per day. A small minority (4%) receives more than £250 per day. One sixth of respondents (14%) said their day rate includes expenses and 11% stated that expenses are paid in addition to their daily fee.

*These findings remain of **critical** concern to the SAU. Over 60% of our membership receives less than the recommended rates of pay and the trend over the past three years shows this is increasing. Similarly, almost one third of the members who facilitate workshops receive less than the recommended rate of pay for a day's work. The rates are viewed by SAU as a minimum requirement of decent remunerated employment. Work has to be done to influence the sector to address this appalling state of affairs.*

Contracts

7.4 There has been an encouraging (5%)increase in the number of artists who always get contacts for paid work, reversing last year's fall: 15.3% (2012), 10.6% (2013), 15.5% (2014). In 2012 42% of members said they sometimes get contracts and a similar group (43%) said they seldom get contracts. The balance between these groups has deteriorated in 2014 with 36% sometimes and 48% seldom getting contacts.

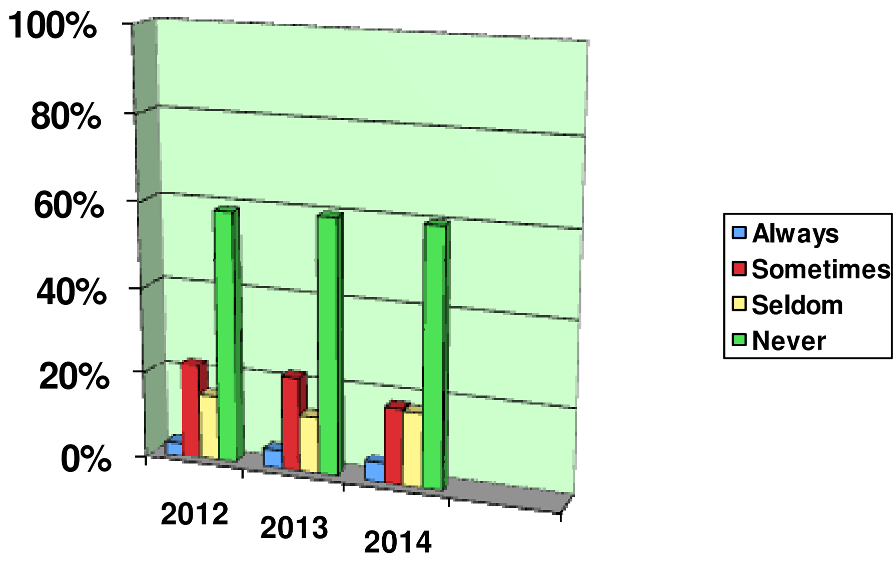
7.5 When contracts are looked at in relation to the distinct groups of visual and applied artists, we find there is a significant difference between the two; with 62% of applied artists seldom getting contracts compared to 45% of visual artists.



7.6 The survey also asked about experiences with contracts. Of great concern is the number of members who have had problems from relying on a verbal contract, which has increased to almost half of the membership: 40.2% (2013), 48.1% (2014). Consistent with last year's finding (2013 was the first time these questions were asked) almost half of respondents (45%) have written their own contract and a third (30%) issue their own terms and conditions. This year there was a small (2%) increase in those who said they had agreed what transpired to be a bad contract: 13.2% (2013), 15.7% (2014).

While the data on contracts points to a slight increase in the number of contracts used by artists for paid work it is still the case that almost half of Scotland's professional artists work without the legal protection and assurances that most employees accept as standard. Even those who do manage to secure a contract have difficulties with ensuring that conditions and terms are adhered to. The findings above highlight the importance of robust contractual arrangement for artists - the SAU will explore members' support needs in this area further.

7.7 The findings around Exhibition Payment Fees show a further downward trend compared to the responses in both the 2012 and 2013 surveys – now less than a quarter (23% compared to 27% in 2012) always or sometimes get a fee, 18% seldom receive a fee and well over half (60%) never receive a fee when exhibiting in publicly funded galleries.



Once again we highlight that the principle of exhibition payment rights has been established but is rarely implemented. It is disheartening that so many of our artists seldom or never receive any fees for exhibiting in the public domain. The SAU is currently involved in a European initiative modeling exhibition payment rights, that we will be promoting to Creative Scotland and the Scottish Government later this year.

Section Eight: Other issues

Creative Scotland

8.1 Views on Creative Scotland were mixed, as identified by our members' responses to the following question: "do you believe the new Creative Scotland funding structure addresses the needs of visual and applied artists?". The majority (66%) ticked "don't know", a quarter said "no" and 10% said "yes".

8.2 While the majority suggested that it was "too early to tell", many members used the comments box to recount their experiences with Creative Scotland, expressing mixed views. Positive comments focused on a hope that recent changes would result in greater access to resources and a simplified grants application process:

- ***"when I received funding from SAC it was for a smaller level of funding than is currently available from CS"***
- ***"waiting for the new guidelines but does sound hopeful!"***
- ***"there are some improvements, but funding applications are complex"***
- ***"the reintroduction of bursaries is a big improvement"***
- ***"the application is less restrictive, e.g. number count. Allows you to argue the case for funding effectively"***
- ***"I think their new funding schemes could be beneficial and an improvement upon previous structures. I look forward to seeing how this may pan out"***
- ***"I feel like on paper it appears to be more user friendly but it will be interesting to see in practice as to whether they offer visual artists actual funding"***

8.3 Negative comments revolved around a few key themes (i) a feeling that CS does little to engage with visual and applied artists (ii) frustrations with the grant award process (iii) fears about it not serving the needs of smaller or emerging artists.

- ***"lack of a dedicated visual art panel for CS awards"***
- ***"they come across as being a bit mistrustful of the artists they are meant to be supporting"***
- ***"should be aimed more towards selected exhibitions in different parts of Scotland rather than individuals"***
- ***"I think taking away Highland Art was sad. The feeling is the arts council really is mostly there for successful artists who know how it works"***
- ***"to be honest my issue with CS was having to explain [the] idea in terms of monetary value or…'what are we getting for our money' this was unhelpful and stupid"***
- ***"too project focused, should also be an opening to apply for financial help for i.e. equipment, studio rent"***
- ***"havingapplied for visual arts and applied arts projects - there is a lack of understanding of applied art processes and equipment needs"***

We will share all findings of relevance with Creative Scotland, including reflections on engagement with the organisation, comments pertaining to its strategy and wider issues affecting our profession. Given that Creative Scotland is one of the key channels by which artists communicate with the Scottish Government, and through which policy changes that affect the sector are implemented, we are hopeful that the views of the membership, expressed via this survey, will be listened to. Any response from Creative Scotland will be relayed to the membership.

Impact of proposed welfare changes

8.4 As a one-off question members were asked if changes proposed by the UK government would adversely affect them. The full wording of the question was: *"The UK government is currently piloting the introduction of Universal Credit to replace current tax credits and some benefits. If fully introduced in its proposed form the new scheme will require self-employed individuals, seeking tax credits or benefit support, to report their income on a monthly basis to establish their eligibility and entitlement for Universal Credit. (For further background see http://litrgold.cubik.co.uk/News/2012/self-emp-uc.htm) If introduced, do you think this new Credit system will adversely effect you?"*

8.5 Two thirds (335) of the membership answered this question; 66% did not feel the changes would affect them and 33% felt it would. The comments section revealed that many members were unaware of the proposed changes and had strongly negative response to the proposed reforms, with key criticisms pertaining to (i) time wastage (ii) a reduction in income and (iii) discouraging people from claiming:

- ***"For one thing it will introduce significant administrative overhead on all self-employed people. For people whose income and status as self-employed, salaried, unemployed can vary enormously even in one year it will lead to very patchy and uneven financial support, possibly leading to support not being there when you most need it"***

- ***"I am extremely concerned about these proposals; the need to report income on a monthly basis will put added strain on self-employed individuals seeking tax credits or benefit support, people who are already under a lot of pressure. From my experience in dealing with Housing Benefit officers I am concerned that those implementing the Universal Credit will not have sufficient training and the volatility of artists earnings from self-employment will not be properly understood or accounted for"***

- ***"I rely heavily on the steady support from the tax credit system as my income varies from month to month and a system where there's no account of the bigger picture is going to be really hard to work with"***

We will continue to monitor the developments and keep our members informed of changes, advocating on behalf of the sector. Given the significant percentage of the membership who are self employed we believe that, should the proposed changes be introduced, there will be negative consequences for some our low-income members. These findings give even stronger claim to our support for a Living Wage for artists.

Voting intentions

8.6 As a one-off question the SAU asked members about their referendum voting intentions, due to the high level of interest in this important political issue. Responses were as follows: Yes (48%), No (18%), Don't Know (22%) and Mind Your Own Business! (13%). Members gave a variety of reasons for their voting intentions, typically linked to their hopes or fears for the future.

The SAU remained neutral on this matter throughout the campaign, although we did host a public discussion event on the potential impact on the arts. Now that the decision has been taken it is not necessary to comment on the overall pattern within the membership but we highlight that the results show our members are a politically engaged group.

Feedback to the SAU

8.7 Once again respondents used the survey as an opportunity to feedback to the Executive committee on a range of topics. Several sought to thank the SAU, with comments such as:

- ***"thank you"***
- ***"the SAU is doing fantastic work. Well done everyone!"***
- ***"I believe the executive does a good job on a shoestring budget"***

8.8 Others made suggestions for activities the SAU might focus on in future (these should be read in conjunction with members' comments about additional benefits and services, presented at 2.5):

- ***"I'm happy for my membership fees to go towards a post or fees to further develop SAU"***
- ***"I am often asked by galleries to give a discount because a customer has asked for this. I think the SAU could play a role in campaigning to stop this from happening. It seems to be an increasing trend. Unions are a good collective way of saying no!"***
- ***"SAU should have an artists' member sitting on the board of Creative Scotland and all other QUANGOS which have a bearing on artists' opportunities. This should include all publicly funded galleries where the council has a union agreement with other unions, e.g. GMB, Unite, Unison etc."***
- ***"SAU should lobby the art schools…to teach practical skills in business to artists"***
- ***"would be good to address Glasgow City Council about their policy on providing affordable rented space for studios; to see if nurture of the arts is going to be lip service only"***
- ***"the recent event SAU independence discussion forum in Glasgow was a good idea…I left with much to consider"***

We are grateful for the ideas and suggestions put forward, and will reflect on these as we consider our work plan for the year ahead.

Section Nine: additional analysis by cohort

9.1 The tables presented at Appendix 2 provide a comparison of data sorted by areas of practice (visual and applied arts), career stage and rural/urban location. This analysis flagged up some noteworthy variations across cohorts; summarised below.

Differences between visual and applied artists

9.2 To determine difference between these groups (bearing in mind that many artists ticked more than one category) the data was separated using the following method:

visual = artists that ticked visual and/or visual plus any other category, excluding applied art (total count; 273 artists) **applied = artists that ticked applied and/or applied plus any other category, excluding visual art (total count; 83 artists)**

9.3 **Compared to *applied* artists (AA), visual artists (VA) are significantly (at least 20%) more likely to:**

- Seek political representation from the SAU (VA=61%, AA=29%)
- Require financial services (VA=62%, AA=41%)
- Have received a private funding award 1-3 times in their career (VA=33%, AA=9%)
- Live in Glasgow (VA=32%, AA=12%,)
- Receive an Exhibition Payment Fee "sometimes" (VA=24%, AA=2%)
- Feel the sector is not healthy or viable (VA=58%, AA=32%)
- Be in receipt of working tax credit (VA=60%, AA=29%)

9.4 **Compared to *visual* artists, applied artists are significantly (at least 20%) more likely to:**

- Use their public liability insurance at fairs (AA=58%, VA=15%)
- Have never applied for a public (AA=64%, VA=32%) or private funding award (AA=87%, VA=44%)
- Receive income from private commissions (AA=70%, VA=43%) and online sources (AA=40%, VA=18%)
- Have never received an exhibition payment fee (AA=90%, VA=51%)
- Feel that the sector is healthy and viable (AA=68%, VA=42%)

9.5 **The table below highlights any difference between the two groups of more than 10%**

		Visual	Applied	Difference
Membership status	Full Member	90%	80%	-10%
	Associate Member	10%	20%	10%
Year joined	2001	13%	1%	-11%
Local Authority	Glasgow	32%	12%	-20%
Practice Base	Rented studio	35%	21%	-14%
	Home based studio	66%	80%	14%
Reason for joining	To be politically represented	61%	29%	-32%

		Visual	Applied	Difference
SAU benefits used	Studio Contents Insurance	21%	10%	-11%
	Discount Material Suppliers	50%	33%	-17%
Other services/benefits	Legal/Contractual advice	55%	41%	-14%
	Arbitration/Conflict resolution	30%	14%	-16%
	Expanded materials discount	45%	58%	13%
	Financial Services; pension planning/tax and VAT guidance	62%	41%	-22%
PL Ins. activities	Exhibitions	72%	60%	-12%
	Fairs	15%	58%	43%
Public funding award	Have never applied	32%	64%	31%
	Received an award 1-3 times	37%	21%	-15%
	Received an award 4+ times	13%	1%	-12%
Private funding award	Have never applied	44%	87%	43%
	Applied but no success	16%	4%	-12%
	Received an award 1-3 times	33%	9%	-24%
Income sources	Local Authorities	32%	14%	-18%
	Public Galleries	21%	10%	-11%
	Higher Education	15%	4%	-11%
	Publicly funded commissions	20%	1%	-19%
	Residencies	19%	0%	-19%
	Private Commissions	43%	70%	27%
	Direct Selling	52%	70%	18%
	Selling through agents / galleries	45%	55%	10%
	Online	18%	40%	22%
Status of practice	Full time - art + private income	28%	18%	-10%
Turnover 2013/14	£0- £10k	69%	80%	10%
	£10-£25k	24%	15%	-10%
Expected Earnings	The same	53%	44%	-10%
Day rates and expenses received for facilitating workshops in your professional practice	I do not facilitate workshops	39%	50%	11%
Contracts for paid work	Sometimes	37%	27%	-10%
	Seldom	46%	62%	16%

		Visual	Applied	Difference
Contract Experiences	Issued a contractor/employer with your terms and conditions	14%	29%	15%
Exhibition Payment Fee	Sometimes	24%	2%	-22%
	Seldom	19%	8%	-10%
	Never	51%	90%	39%
Is this a healthy and viable sector?	Yes	42%	68%	25%
	No	58%	32%	-25%
Welfare changes	Affect me	37%	25%	-12%
	Will not affect me	63%	75%	12%
Benefits & Credits	Working Families Tax Credit	24%	13%	-11%
	Working Tax Credit	60%	29%	-31%
	Housing Benefit	8%	19%	11%
	Disability Living Allowance	12%	6%	-6%
Creative Scotland addresses member's needs	No	28%	14%	-15%
	Don't know/not aware	61%	79%	18%

Differences between artists living in rural and urban areas

9.6 To determine differences between these groups (bearing in mind that many local authorities contain both rural and urban areas) the data was separated using the following method:

Urban = the local authorities containing Scotland's four largest cities (Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen) (45% of membership)

Rural = all other local authorities) (55% of membership)

9.7 **Compared to *rural* artists (RA), urban artists (UA) are significantly (at least 20%) <u>more</u> likely to:**

- Work at a rented studio (UA=49%, RA=13%)
- Be at an early career stage (UA=35%, RA=14%)
- Use Discount Material Suppliers (UA=58%, RA=37%)
- Require financial services (UA=71%, RA=47%)
- Believe proposed welfare changes will affect them (UA=49%, RA=25%)
- Be in receipt of working tax credit (UA=58%, RA=18%)

9.8 There are also some interesting findings with regards to income sources; urban artists are at least 10% more likely to sell through the following channels: local authorities, higher education, publically funded commissions and residencies.

9.9 **Compared to *urban* artists (UA), rural artists (RU) are significantly (at least 20%) more likely to:**

- Work from a home studio (RA=85%, UA=52%)
- Be at an advanced career stage (RA=40%, UA=18%)
- Use Public Liability Insurance for Open Studios (RA=62%, UA=15%)
- Have never applied for a private funding award (RA=65%, UA=43%)
- Believe proposed welfare changes will not affect them (RA=75%, UA=51%)

9.10 There are also some interesting findings with regards to income sources; rural artists are at least 10% more likely to sell through the following channels: private workshops, direct selling and via agents or galleries.

The table below highlights any difference between the two groups of more than 10%

		Rural	**Urban**	**Difference**
	TOTAL RESPONSES	229	186	
Area of Practice	Applied Arts/Crafts	37%	23%	-14%
Local Authority	Dumfries & Galloway	10%	0%	-10%
Practice Base	Rented studio	13%	49%	36%
	Home based studio	84%	52%	-32%
	Sessional facilities	6%	21%	15%
Career Stage	Early	14%	35%	21%
	Advanced	40%	18%	-22%
Reason for joining	To be politically represented	49%	61%	13%
SAU benefits used	Discount Material Suppliers	37%	58%	21%
Other services/benefits	Legal/Contractual advice	47%	62%	15%
	Financial Services; pension planning/tax and VAT guidance	47%	71%	25%
PL Ins. Activities	Open Studios	62%	15%	-47%
Public funding award	Have never applied	50%	31%	-19%
	Applied but no success	13%	23%	10%
Private funding award	Have never applied	65%	43%	-22%

		Rural	Urban	Difference
	Received an award 1-3 times	22%	34%	12%
Income sources	Local Authorities	24%	34%	10%
	Higher Education	5%	19%	14%
	Publicly funded commissions	11%	23%	12%
	Residencies	7%	21%	14%
	Private Workshops	39%	25%	-14%
	Direct Selling	62%	48%	-14%
	Selling through agents / galleries	54%	36%	-19%
Status of practice	Part time - art + part time income	35%	46%	11%
Contracts for paid work	Sometimes	32%	41%	10%
	Seldom	54%	41%	-13%
Contract Experiences	Had problems resulting from a lack of contract	29%	39%	10%
	Had problems from relying on a verbal contract	34%	49%	14%
Exhibition Payment Fee	Sometimes	12%	24%	12%
	Never	70%	50%	-19%
Welfare changes	Affect me	25%	49%	24%
	Will not affect me	75%	51%	-24%
Voting intentions	No	23%	11%	-12%
Benefits & Credits	Working Families Tax Credit	10%	20%	10%
	Working Tax Credit	18%	58%	41%

Variations by career stage

9.11 Differences linked to career stage were less marked and more nuanced. The full data set is provided in Appendix 2, but some interesting trends are evident across the cohorts of early career (EC) mid career (MC) and advanced career (AC) artists:

- Since 2011 there has been a marked increase of growth in membership from those in the early stages of their career (EC=65%, MC=42%, AC=35%)
- Advanced career artists had the highest full membership profile (AC=95%. MC=93%, EC=74%)
- Advanced career artists are slightly more likely to work in applied arts (AC=36%, EC=29%)
- Early stage artists dominate the urban areas, with a notable shift towards rural residence from those in advanced stages of their careers. This is clear when trends are compared across the rural local authority area of Dumfries and

Galloway (EC=1%, MC=4%, AC=10%) to the city of Glasgow (EC=38%, MC=28%, AC=14%).

- While trends in use of sessional facilities are consistent across career stage, there are clear changes in studio rental and use of home premises; with rented studios more popular among early stage artists (EC=41%, MC=32%, AC=15%) and home premises used by greater numbers as careers progress (EC=55%, MC=70%, AC=80%).

- Reasons for joining and benefits used are largely consistent across the career cohorts, but desires for other services are more evident in the group of early-mid stage artists, for example: legal advice (EC=57%, MC=54%, AC=37%) and financial services (EC=64%, MC=63%, AC=33%).

- It appears that artists' activity declines over the course of their career progression, as evidenced by decreases in the percentage of artists using the public liability insurance across every event category. By way of example see exhibitions (EC=78%, MC=28%, AC=26%), teaching (EC=40%, MC=23%, AC=19%) and public events (EC=51%, MC=19%, AC=17%).

- There is a trend as careers develop to progress towards full time practice – combined full time (solely art + private income) (EC=36%, MC=53%, AC=59%).

- In some cases there are consistencies in the responses between early and advanced stage career artists, but a significant variation at the mid career point. For example (i) self-employment: (EC=69%, MC=89%, AC=69%), (ii) believing that Creative Scotland does not address needs: (EC=20%, MC=30%, AC=20%) (iii) receipt of Working Families Tax Credit: (EC=9%, MC=30%, AC=10%) (iv) feeling that welfare reforms will affect them: (EC=35%, MC=59%, AC=22%), (v) issuing own contract: (EC=18%, MC=32%, AC=22%).

- There are also trends in sales. Almost half of the identified income sources decline with career progression, for example: (i) local authorities (EC=30%, MC=34%, AC=18%); (ii) residencies (EC=16%, MC=16%, AC=7%), higher education (EC=15%, MC=14%, AC=4%). Three income sources appear to increase with career progression; private commissions (EC=16%, MC=16%, AC=7%), private workshops (EC=25%, MC=35%, AC=35%); and galleries (EC=30%, MC=50%, AC=52%). The following are generally consistent across careers: online sales (EC=25%, MC=21%, AC=23%) and healthcare (EC=5%, MC=9%, AC=5%). There is a spike at the mid career point in sales via publically funded commissions (EC=11%, MC=22%, AC=10%).

- Engagement styles vary by career stage; while levels of satisfaction with the SAU's current level of communication are largely consistent across the cohorts (EC=65%, MC=58%, AC=66%); early stage artists are far more likely to use social media channels than mid to advanced stage artists: Facebook use (EC=40%, MC=21%, AC=15%).

The findings in this section show us that across areas of practice, residence and career stage artist have different behaviours, needs and experiences. This gives us much food for thought and enhances our capacity to package and/or target support based on more individualised circumstances. The findings will also be of significant interest to arts and culture policy makers in understanding the sector and finding out about behaviours linked to practice or career stage.

There is also scope to reflect on the work that we do in terms of its reach and applicability across groups; for example, as a union, are our current services and benefits more likely to be taken advantage of by members living in urban areas? Do our communication strategies resonate more with early stage artists – and is this why we have seen an increase in membership from this cohort in recent years? Why are there differences in responses from mid career artists –for example the increased self-employment rate; might the associated challenges with self employment cause people to leave the profession (or our membership) – resulting in those that do stay returning to the baseline position reported by early stage artists?

Reflections, conclusions and recommendations

The SAU represents the interests of artists in Scotland who form a vibrant and important sector of the economy. Our members' creative practice reflects, contributes to and benefits the communities in which they live and operate. This skilled and varied profession has a long history of enduring financial struggles while seeking to establish a creative platform on which to perform their craft.

This survey focuses on the employment experiences of artists. It paints a picture of a diverse group of workers who undertake a huge range of activities. Most face a career with low pay, uncertain prospects, unclear contracts and the requirement to take on several jobs in order to earn a living. The nature of practice sees many members working in isolation, experiencing challenges in navigating a complex set of professional, practical and financial difficulties in order to succeed.

The evidence presented in this survey underlines the need for our union to act in the interests of our members, the majority of whom are self employed and do not have ready access to structured opportunities to have their voices heard. Many artists need support to address the practical and professional challenges that go with establishing and sustaining a successful career in this field of activity.

Through the development of our survey and our new additional cohort analysis, we are beginning to better understand the challenges faced by the sector and particular groups of artists, depending on their area of practice, location and career stage. Our lines of communication enable us to evidence members' needs, provide services and benefits, and offer advice and support to the workers who operate in this demanding sector. Importantly, we represent the sector and lobby on members' behalf, in order that others can also provide resources, understand and respond to their needs.

The task for the SAU is to act upon the information we have gathered, be clear about the priorities of our members and to ensure that the services we offer are accessible and meet their needs. We also need to communicate these findings and ensure that we work to influence others so they can also play a part in supporting the sector. This survey plays a crucial role in bringing all this together and helps ensure that the SAU activities are guided by the needs of artists. We thank our members for participating.

The year on year increases in the numbers of artists participating in our survey is encouraging, and we hope to build on this in the future. Our members' responses have highlighted a number of significant issues affecting artists and captured key elements of their professional practice. These are summarised as follows:

- 78% are self employed
- 51% are full time practitioners
- 72% work from home
- 88% earn less than £10k per year from their art; and 66% believe they will earn the same or less next year
- 59% have never received public funding
- 48% do not get contracts consistently

- 62% often receive less than the recommended SAU Rates of Pay for paid professional work and there has been a marked decrease in the numbers who regularly receive the recommend rate of pay
- 78% seldom or never receive an Exhibition Payment Fee
- 50% do not believe the sector is healthy and viable

Recommendations

The SAU as an organisation should:

- build on the success of the third annual survey, feedback to the membership and promote the survey as one of the key means of engaging with the SAU each year. This could include emailing members to alert them when the annual report has been published, providing a link to the document and highlighting the key findings.
- continue to review communication approaches on an ongoing basis, to engage the widest spectrum of the membership possible. This will keep members informed and engaged with executive decisions and actions around important current issues.
- consider increasing the support offered to members with a focus on raising awareness of and/or signposting members to information and services that centre on the business development and financial aspects of their chosen career. This could include the development of information on income sources, funding opportunities, contract management, marketing, pensions, benefit entitlement, financial planning, insurance issues; all needs identified by members.
- explore the make up of the sector more fully, including those who have come to art as a “later” or “second career”.
- consider a strategy to identify potential membership candidates and ways to engage artists who do not currently hold membership (for example, those who are members of the SAU Facebook group).
- continue to monitor and gather evidence about the diversity of practice and circumstances of the membership.
- seek to answer key questions posed by the data: including reasons for a high percentage of early stage artists holding associate membership, the drop off in membership from those at an advanced career stage, changes in income sources and a significant number never having applied for a funding award.
- consider further amendments to the annual survey to permit more certainty in interpretation of the data. This would include asking participants their age group (to determine if categorization by career stage is linked to age; i.e “early stage” relates to younger artists), rural or urban location, main area of practice and, under the benefits question, to ask if they are not in receipt of benefits and/or receive a pension.
- linked to the above, consider the benefits in offering respondents an opportunity to identify any specific diversity needs they may have, e.g. caring responsibilities, health needs, gender, age, sexual orientation or ethnicity needs, in order that progress towards meeting those needs can be tracked over time.
- use the survey to lobby on behalf of members.

The SAU as the members' representative seeks to:

- address the basic principles of professional respect for its members; rates of pay, contracts, exhibition payment rights.
- continue to engage with the political and arts establishment to ensure the role of the visual and applied arts sector is recognised and valued.
- strive to raise its profile in order to effectively advocate on the behalf of members.
- continue to be proactive in addressing challenges and barriers that impede professional creative practice.
- build stronger and more effective alliances with other representative bodies.